

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey

January 28, 2004

The President. It is my honor to welcome Prime Minister Erdogan to the Oval Office for the second time. I've been looking forward to this meeting because Turkey is a friend and an important ally of America. I have found that the Prime Minister is a person who is easy to talk to. He's a straightforward man, which makes it easy to be able to deal with common issues.

And we talked about Iraq, and I assured him the United States' ambition is for a peaceful country, a democratic Iraq that is territorially intact.

He briefed me on the Cyprus talks, and I appreciated his trying to find a solution—a solution to a long-standing dispute.

I appreciate the Prime Minister's steadfast determination to fight terror. Both of us understand what it means to have our fellow citizens destroyed by the merciless killing of terrorists. Both of us understand that we must stay on the offensive against terrorists and bring them to justice before they hurt innocent people.

Over lunch, we'll discuss other issues of importance. I'm really looking forward to going to Turkey later on this year. It's going to be an important meeting. Every one of my friends who has traveled to your country has come back with great stories of warm hospitality and magnificent sights.

So I'm proud to welcome our friend to the Oval Office.

Prime Minister Erdogan. First of all, I would like to thank you very much. It, indeed, made us very happy to learn that

after listing PKK and KADEK in the list of terrorist organizations, the United States has decided to list KONGRA-GEL among terrorist organizations. We were very happy for that. We thank you.

It's very obvious where Turkey stands in the fight against terrorism—that needs to be mutual and international, especially in the aftermath of what happened on September 11th. We are in a common effort to fight terrorism, and we share the same views regarding our strategic partnership in restructuring Iraq.

I also share the same views in—in developing Middle East. And we spoke of the fact that we support the good will mission of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and we are willing to restart the negotiations, taking Annan's plan as a reference point.

I state once again that the Turkish side is determined for a solution. We will always be a step ahead of our Greek counterparts, and we're determined to solve this as soon as possible.

I thank you for your invitation, for your——

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, Prime Minister Erdogan referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress Reporting a Certification Required by the
Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention
January 28, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify pursuant to Condition 7(C)(i), Effectiveness of the Australia Group, that:

- Australia Group members continue to maintain equally effective or more comprehensive controls over the export of: toxic chemicals and their precursors; dual-use processing equipment; human, animal, and plant pathogens and toxins with potential biological weapons applications; and dual-use biological equipment, as that afforded by the Australia Group as of April 25, 1997; and

- The Australia Group remains a viable mechanism for limiting the spread of chemical and biological weapons-related materials and technology, and the effectiveness of the Australia Group has not been undermined by changes in membership, lack of compliance with common export controls and non-proliferation measures, or the weakening of common controls and non-proliferation measures, in force as of April 25, 1997.

The factors underlying this certification are described in the enclosed statement of justification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
January 28, 2004.

Message to the Congress on the United States Air Force Operating
Location Near Groom Lake, Nevada
January 28, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 6001(a) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (the “Act”), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6961(a), notification is hereby given that on September 16, 2003, I issued Presidential Determination 2003–39 (copy enclosed) and thereby exercised the authority to grant certain exemptions under section 6001(a) of the Act.

Presidential Determination 2003–39 exempted the United States Air Force’s operating location near Groom Lake, Nevada, from any Federal, State, interstate, or local hazardous or solid waste laws that might

require the disclosure of classified information concerning that operating location to unauthorized persons. Information concerning activities at the operating location near Groom Lake has been properly determined to be classified, and its disclosure would be harmful to national security. Continued protection of this information is, therefore, in the paramount interest of the United States.

The determination was not intended to imply that, in the absence of a Presidential exemption, RCRA or any other provision of law permits or requires the disclosure of classified information to unauthorized